

*Stimulus funding recipients will now be 'encouraged' but not required to post signs*

**WASHINGTON, DC** – In a letter to Oversight and Government Reform Committee Ranking Member Darrell Issa, Department of Transportation Inspector General Calvin L. Scovel III stated that the Federal Railroad Administration and the Federal Transit Administration, “have relaxed their original ARRA signage requirements” and DOT agencies no longer require ARRA (American Recovery and Reinvestment Act) signage. Despite this change, Rep. Issa remains concerned about inappropriate propaganda efforts pushed by the Department of Transportation and a lack of focus on creating private sector jobs.

“Despite eliminating requirements to post signs, Department of Transportation agencies are still improperly focused on pushing projects to display signs crediting President Obama and the so-called ‘stimulus’ for earmarked funding handouts,” said Issa. “The Administration’s obsession with using taxpayer money to get political credit for projects adds unnecessary expenses and bureaucracy to a spending package that’s failing to spur promised job creation in the private sector.”

The Federal Railroad Administration’s decision to eliminate requirements for posting stimulus signs took effect on July 15, 2010 and follows questions and criticism by Republican Members of Congress, including Rep. Issa and Rep. Aaron Schock, about the improper use of stimulus funds for politically motivated signage. On June 24, 2010, [Ranking Member Issa wrote to Recovery Act and Transparency Board Chairman Earl Devaney](#) to obtain information about politicized stimulus advertising including an accounting of rules issued by federal agencies on signage and whether the posting of signs was a requirement for obtaining stimulus funding.

[DOT IG Scovel’s letter to Rep. Issa](#)

was sent as part of the response to this request. Added pressure was put on the Department of Transportation to drop stimulus propaganda requirements by

[Rep. Aaron Schock’s July 13 proposal to prohibit funding for any additional stimulus signs which was selected by the American people](#)

to go to the House floor for a vote through the House Republican YouCut project.

Prior to the July 15 change, the Federal Railroad Administration, according to the Inspector General, required High-Speed Intercity Passenger Rail grant recipients to “post a sign at all fixed project locations at the most publicly accessible location and a plaque on all purchased or rehabilitated rail cars announcing that the project or equipment was funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Railroad Administration with funds provided through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.” Despite the fact that the Federal Railroad Administration no longer legally requires the posting of such signs, their guidance continues to encourage grant recipients to spend Federal stimulus dollars on such signage and continues to have one of the more egregious stimulus propaganda sign posting policies including provisions

stipulating:

- *ARRA Project Signs should be stand-alone signs, with the sole purpose of identifying the project as being funded (in whole or in part) by ARRA.*
- *Grantees may elect to have a secondary sign which identifies other project partners (e.g. State, city county, corporate partners), but such secondary project signs should be smaller and less prominent than ARRA project sign. An ARRA Project sign must be located adjacent to each placement of such a secondary project sign.*
- *ARRA Project Signs should be designed to maximize visibility of the Recovery.Gov and USDOT TIGER logos and minimize any accompanying text.*
- *For rail vehicles purchased or rehabilitated using ARRA funding, ARRA Project Sign should take the form of decal, no smaller than 12 inches measured diagonally. For passenger rail cars, such decals should be placed so as to be visible to every passenger entering the car (e.g. on or adjacent to each vestibule door and/or each exterior door). For locomotives, such decals should be place in the lower front of the locomotive body, adjacent to an builder plate.*
- *ARRA Project Signs should be located at the project site so as to maximize their visibility to rail passengers and passersby approaching the site.*

The legal basis for Department of Transportation agencies to require the posting of stimulus signs has long been questioned. Rep. Issa and Rep. Schock will continue efforts to minimize the waste and improper use of funds being spent as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

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